

**Proposed
DECISION DOCUMENTATION**

**CEDAR HOUSE TIMBER SALE
EA No. OR125-97-15**

Background:

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Cedar House timber sale were prepared by the Umpqua Resource Area, Coos Bay District Office, using input from District resource staff and public comment. The proposal is to harvest approximately 90 acres of timber from the General Forest Management Area (GFMA) using a regeneration harvest as the silvicultural method of treatment to provide forest products and maintain biodiversity on the site for future forest health. The Cedar House sale is located in T. 21 S., R. 08 W., Section 33, Willamette Meridian. Details of the timber sale plan and EA are available for public review at the Coos Bay District Office.

Management objectives are to:

- Offer economic opportunities for year-round, high-wage, high-skill jobs by producing a predictable and sustainable level of timber harvest;
- Partially fulfill the Umpqua Resource Area's harvest commitment for the Coos Bay District in General Forest Management Area (GFMA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 1998;
- Maintain or improve habitat within the forest ecosystem to support populations of native species;
- Protect and enhance the biodiversity and long-term health of the forest ecosystem through compliance with the Record of Decision for the Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan (RMP).

Decision:

My decision is to implement Alternative 2 (proposed action) as described in EA OR125-97-15.

In accordance with the *Forest Management Regulations* at CFR 5003.2, the decision for this timber sale will not become effective or be opened to formal protest until *Notice of Sale* is published "in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the lands affected by the decision are located." For this project, the *Notice of Sale* will be published in *The World* newspaper on November 4, 1997 and constitutes the decision document for purposes of protests, 43 CFR Subpart 5003 - Administrative Remedies. Protests of the decision to offer timber for sale described here must be filed within 15 days after the first publication of the newspaper notice.

Approximately 4.5 MMBF of timber harvested from the Cedar House Timber Sale would be offered as an advertised sale as part of the Coos Bay District's harvest commitment from the General Forest Management Area in FY 1998. There would be no new road construction and the majority of the units would be yarded by helicopter. The sale units would be regenerated by planting conifer seedlings following site preparation. Site preparation under Alternative 2 consists of prescribed broadcast burning of Units 1, 2, and 3. Site preparation on Units 4, 5a, and 5b would consist of slashing brush, followed by handpiling, covering piles with polyethylene sheeting, and burning the piles in the winter. The Design Features such as road improvement, logging method, snag and down log retention, described in the EA are hereby adopted.

The design features and management requirements will be implemented as described in the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan/EIS* and its *Record of Decision (RMP)* (BLM, May 1995) which is in conformance with the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its *Record of Decision (Interagency, 1994)*.

This sale has been surveyed for sensitive, threatened or endangered wildlife and botanical species. No threatened or endangered species as defined by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, were found on the project area.

Rationale:

The proposed action meets the intent of the *Record of Decision* for the RMP by providing a balance of forest products and biodiversity for future health of the forest. A watershed analysis has been completed for both affected subwatersheds and harvest is limited to the GFMA land allocation. The project meets the objectives of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy as listed on page 6-7 of the RMP.

The Coos Bay District consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on the Northern Spotted Owl and the Marbled Murrelet as required by Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The Biological Opinion of the USFWS stated that the proposed forest management activities are not expected to jeopardize the continued existence of the spotted owl or murrelet.

Project level conferencing on BLM management actions affecting Oregon coast steelhead trout and consultation on Umpqua River cutthroat trout was included in the August 1997 District Biological Assessment submission to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). A Biological Opinion was received from NMFS on October 1, 1997 addressing these species which authorizes incidental take.

This sale has been surveyed for sensitive, threatened or endangered wildlife and botanical species. No populations of threatened or endangered species, as defined by the Endangered species Act of 1973, as amended, were found on the project area.

Mark A. Buckbee
Umpqua Area Manager

Date